



Transport of Animals – Standard Operating Procedures

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1. Overview

Purpose

The Drexel University Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) has established this procedure to ensure that animal transport outside of ULAR animal facilities is performed in a manner that is safe for the animals and healthy for the personnel using the vehicle.

2. Procedures

- All locations where animal activity will occur must be listed on an IACUC approved protocol.
- Animals must never be left unattended when outside of a secure animal housing facility or laboratory.
- Animals must be returned to ULAR facilities within 12 hours of removal unless otherwise approved in an IACUC protocol.
- ULAR should be contacted if any unusual transportation issues are proposed, to reduce the risk of disease transmission to the rest of the animal colony.
- Animals cannot be transported across state lines without proper paperwork and veterinary clearance.

2.1 Transport Within a Building

- Animals being transported from ULAR facilities to a laboratory (and vice versa) within the same building do not need an animal transfer form unless they are being transferred from one IACUC approved protocol to another. All locations must be listed on an IACUC approved protocol.
- The animals should be transported in their home cage with a filter top to ensure proper ventilation. Rabbits and larger species should be transported in covered secured carriers. An individual cage may be carried carefully by hand. Multiple cages should be transported on a cart. The cages should be covered with a sheet or cloth to prevent animals from being viewed by the public. Water bottles should be removed to prevent wetting of bedding during transport. Lids should be kept on cages until animals are used and replaced when the animal is returned to the cage to reduce contamination of the lab with allergens.
- All animals must be transported on designated elevators and paths, and by the quickest route to or from the lab. Surfaces that the animal will contact should be cleaned before and between animals to reduce the risk of disease transmission.
- Animals should remain contained until their use, then immediately transported back to their holding room.

2.2 Transport from ULAR Facilities to Another Building on the Same Campus

- Animals transported from ULAR facilities to a laboratory within the same campus where the path necessitates outdoor travel will not require a transfer form; unless they are being transferred from one IACUC approved protocol to another.



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- The animals should be transported in an opaque shipment container with home cage enrichment, food, and hydrogel cup (if applicable). The shipping container should be covered with an opaque transfer cover.
- An individual cage may be carried carefully by hand. Multiple cages should be transported on a cart. All animals must be transported on designated elevators and paths, and by the quickest route to or from the lab. The transport container, cover, and enrichment (if applicable) must be returned to the ULAR for autoclaving.
- Animal should not be returned to ULAR housing unless approved by the IACUC and veterinary staff.

2.3 Transport Between ULAR Facilities or Between Institutions

- Shipping or receiving animals to another ULAR facility or institution must be approved by the IACUC and the veterinary staff by completing an Animal Transfer Form. Animals received from other institutions must be ordered via ULAR and in consultation with the veterinary staff. Health records must be reviewed by the veterinarian prior to shipping animals to Drexel from other institutions. Most likely, these animals are required to be quarantined. Animals shipped from Drexel to another institution must follow the regulations of that institution.
- Shipping animals between Drexel sites or to another institution should be arranged by the ULAR staff using an outside commercial animal transportation service. Transportation of animals to another institution requires appropriate documentation and approvals from the ULAR and may take some time to arrange.
- Special arrangements are required for animals that leave the institution and are returned. These special cases must be approved by the IACUC and ULAR.

2.4 Transport in Privately Owned Vehicles

- Using privately owned vehicles for transportation of animals is strongly discouraged because it affects the safety and health of the animal and the individuals and their families who use the vehicle. The use of any privately-owned vehicle must be approved by the IACUC, and the vehicle must be inspected by IACUC or ULAR staff, as delegated by the IACUC, prior to its use.
- **The following must be described in the IACUC protocol:**
 - **Caging** – Rodents must be transported in commercially available shipping crates with isolator tops to reduce the risk of exposure to animal allergens. Larger animals must be transported in sturdy and secure covered cages with sufficient ventilation. Water bottles should be removed to prevent wetting bedding but should be returned immediately when in the new location.
 - **Vehicle** – The vehicle must be climate controlled and the temperature close to that of the housing room (68 F – 72 F). Animals must not be transported in the trunks of vehicles. The vehicle must be cleaned before and after use. It is recommended that the seats or carpet be covered with leak-proof disposable materials to prevent contamination (plastic trash can liner). Animal caging must be secured in the vehicle with straps or ropes to prevent shifting or overturning of cages during transport. The vehicle must not be unattended while animals are inside.



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- **Decontamination** - Investigators must provide details on how the vehicle will be decontaminated before the vehicle is used for personal use.
- **Route** – The animals must be transported directly to the other building. The route of transfer should be that which minimizes observation by the public and should utilize nonpublic pathways such as loading docks, freight elevators and nonpublic corridors.
- **Adverse Events** - Any adverse events during transport must be immediately reported to the IACUC.

3. Responsibilities

3.1 Drexel University IACUC Responsibilities

The Drexel University IACUC and the IACUC Office are responsible for maintaining this guidance document, training, and monitoring. All exceptions to this procedure must be approved by the IACUC. For inquiries regarding these procedures, please contact the Director of Animal Welfare, a part of the Office for Research & Innovation (ORI), or the Attending Veterinarian.

3.2 Principal Investigator’s Responsibilities

Investigators must secure IACUC approval before animals are transported. The responsibility for proper transport of animals is that of the Principal Investigator and the PI’s staff in consultation with the ULAR staff.

4. Revisions

Edition 001/Effective Date: 08/20/2003 – Original Document

Edition 001/Review Date: 12/14/2011 – Original Document

Edition 001/Review Date: 02/2018 -- Original Document

Edition 001/Review Date: 09/2021 -- Original Document

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- Updated formatting to new template.